

# Community Environmental Advisory Commission Agenda

Regular Meeting

August 16, 2022 - 05:00 PM

City Hall Room 132

**Members:** Hannah Bohn, **Max Dalton**, Indigo Davitt- Liu, Meron Demissie, **Mark Dhennin**, **Tess Dornfeld**, **Divine Islam**, Mathew Douglas-May, **Sandy Fazeli**, **Lauren Fleming**, Maddie Henderson, **LesLee Jackson**, **Anna Johnson**, Toya Lopez, Barbara Lunde, **Nicholas Minderman**, **Erin Niehoff**, **Suzanne Savanick Hansen**, Jaqueline Zepeda (Quorum - 10)

Staff: Kim W. Havey, Bjorn Olson

**Guests:** None

## Call to Order

1. Roll Call.
2. Adoption of the agenda.

A motion was made and passed to amend the agenda to remove the MN350 presentation and correct the minutes from the July 19<sup>th</sup> meeting.

3. Acceptance of minutes

[July 19, 2022 Community Environmental Advisory Commission](#)

## Consent

Location:  
Minneapolis City Hall  
350 S 5<sup>th</sup> St. Room 132

Land Acknowledgement: As we meet here today, we are reminded that Minneapolis is situated on the homelands of the Dakota people. An area that is steeped in rich Indigenous history, it is home to Indigenous people from more than 30 different nations. As a City, we have a responsibility to care for the land on which we live and work and all its natural surroundings. This stewardship is an integral part of our involvement in this commission, and we honor it as we begin our meeting. We now open this space to discuss ways in which we can support Indigenous and Black people in our community.

Tess Dornfeld noted an article in the [Sahan Journal](#) regarding family separation and unlikely reunification disproportionately affecting black and Native families in the Hennepin County foster care system.

The Inflation Reduction Act was signed into law and has significant allocations for Environmental Justice funding and resources.

Little Earth and the Sustainable Resources Center will coordinate on full weatherization of the 212 units of the Little Earth Housing Community.

Minneapolis residents enrolled in the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) are exempt from the CenterPoint rate spike. This could affect tens of thousands of Minneapolis residents; the group is encouraged to spread the word and encourage eligible families to apply.

## Presentations:

Climate Equity Plan – Kim Havey, Director of Sustainability – City of Minneapolis

Kim Havey gave the presentation on the ongoing Minneapolis Climate Equity Plan. CEAC will be represented in this process with a primary and secondary member. Anna Johnson volunteered as the primary member and several others expressed interest in participating in topic-specific working groups. In addition to climate mitigation, adaptation will be a component of the Plan as well.

*Climate Equity Plan discussion:*

LesLee suggested including the word “safe” to resilient. House fires and apartment fires need knob and tube wiring to be upgraded. There is money in IRA for this work.

Q: How does weatherization interact with rental houses and requiring property owner approval? This is a complex relationship the City is working with the utilities on for energy usage disclosure and project approval.

Q: How can we relate climate to trees that people love? This specifically relates to EJ and equity neighborhoods. Tree maintenance is also an issue: trimming and watering are needed, not just planting. How is Sustainability and the City working with Park Board planning staff?

A tree coordinator to work with the Park Board in Health has been approved in the Mayor’s budget. There is also a plan to increase tree coverage from 600,000 to 800,000 trees. There is also an option for tree removal to be incrementally assessed through property taxes. This could be used for other maintenance and treatment as well.

*CEAC member commitment*

CEAC members can engage via topical working groups or as a CEAC representative

**Discussion:**

Welcome Council Member Payne

Council member Payne discussed his campaign prioritization of public safety and housing with climate as the foundation everything is built on. But campaigning is different than governing. The question remains: how do we get things done within our institution? One of his first ordinances passed was an auto-body shop VOC-reduction resolution in coordination with the Green Cost Share Program. This allows shops to convert to more environmentally friendly operations over a generous amount of time while modernizing their operation with City support. A key issue was small business support, but a framework to address this and scale up incentives aligned support within Council and the Mayor’s Office. This lesson could be applied to climate change as well.

Some of these issues go “against the grain” but the key to moving legislation is identifying the political environment and where the fights can be won. The scale of climate action can seem large but the reality is there are a series of small victories we can achieve. Touring a Passive House provided insights to revamping our housing stock. There are opportunities in local government zoning and code that can help unlock opportunities to address retrofits and upgrades. Climate Action is an issue where there is Council alignment with the Mayor’s Office. Change can happen through ordinances or budgetary allocations, but getting creative is key.

**Q&A**

Nick: Any thoughts on Hennepin 24/7 bus lanes and battles to fight? Climate is going to take tough small decisions even with general consensus.

CM Payne: The new government structure was an interesting design vs. operational legal debate which positioned the Council against the Mayor. As the new government structure matures, there may be clarity over power roles and where the Council can step up.

Nick: What role do advisory committees play in informing council members?

CM Payne: It’s hard to be informed on everything. He appreciates the expertise and recommendations of Committees and relies on them to make decisions. Recommendations from committees that address the political landscape and inform the stake of the issue are helpful.

Sandy: Your predecessor (CM Reich) seemed more passive to the will of fellow council members. When the Council changed, the needle moved on the Roof Depot project. CEAC can no longer break out into sub-groups or speak to each other in a business capacity. This affects the process and the quality of information. This also relates to the Open Meeting Law and restriction of hybrid meetings. Is there anything we can do to address this?

CM Payne: Council President Jenkins sent an e-mail asking how to engage with boards and committees effectively and utilizing Boards and Commissions as resources. Intergovernmental Relations work will need to be done, but that feedback is valuable to take back to Council.

Kim: Staff capacity was also an issue for virtual meetings, but this could be addressed internally through budget and resources, not necessarily a procedural undertaking.

Kim: What's the philosophy and balance of change through regulation vs incentive?

CM Payne: The auto body shop ordinance is an example of what is possible for City incentives. If we take climate change as an emergency, we can't kid-glove these conversations. The politics of enforcement are fraught, but we don't have the broad political consensus to meet the moment at the scale we need yet. It does feel like there is a tipping point approaching in our favor. Federal legislation and dollars are huge, this election and the political conditions will be crucial. The environmental conditions are changing and more aggressive political footing is coming.

Nick: The IRA has refundable tax credits for home and small business retrofits, but low-income households won't be incentivized as much. Is there a sufficient case for directing money to people who wouldn't benefit from tax credits?

CM Payne: This sounds like a possibility. Framing a case for urgency where federal resources have unnecessary barriers to Environmental Justice is something that could be done at a local level.

Aggregating the value of these credits and using it to justify funding to fill that gap might be provide a path for funding.

Kim: Green banks are an option to scale up weatherization projects. Tariff on-bill financing had similar conversations and issues. Minneapolis has issued 3 green bonds in the last 5 years for hundreds of millions of dollars. The City pays very low interest rates and attaching to Green Premiums draws considerable investment.

LesLee: Who is regulating and monitoring the auto body shops? Is there a plan to increase inspectors?

CM Payne: Environmental Services has inspectors assigned to auto body shops that worked with them on that ordinance. The inspectors will have the knowledge if someone doesn't comply.

Remaining topics for 2022

Council Member CEAC Attendance

Council Member Vetaw would be a priority (Public Health and Safety). Council member Rainville would be another option.

2023 CEAC membership strategy

CEAC representation (primary and alternate) on the Climate Equity Plan

## **Old Business**

Opportunities to engage:

- Interest in Resilient Cities & Communities Water Quality initiative
- Invitations to council members to attend CEAC
- Open Streets tabling – West Broadway, Sat. Sept 10: 11am – 4:30pm

## **Updates and Announcements from Commissioners and staff**

- VOC-reducing ordinance [passed](#) by the Public Health and Safety Committee
- Applications are being take now for the [Green Cost Share program](#)
  - Lawncare and landscaping equipment
  - Auto body shop paint conversion
  - Diesel emission reduction opportunities

## **Possible Future CEAC Meeting Topics:**

- Sustainable building policies for City Financed economic development
- Air monitoring networks in Minneapolis
- Carbon Free Zones and fossil gas free development
- How to reduce plastic in the community?
- How do we reduce emissions from the HERC?
- Electrical heating technologies

**Masks and hand sanitizer will be provided. After 6pm the S 5th Street doors (light rail side) to City Hall are locked. Bus passes and parking passes for the Haaf Ramp are available.**

## **Adjournment**

Tess Dornfeld made a motion to adjourn. Max Dalton and Nicholas Minderman seconded the motion.

**Next Community Environmental Advisory Commission meeting:** September 20, 2022 from 5-7 PM

For reasonable accommodations or alternative formats please contact the City Coordinator's Office at 612-673-2563 or e-mail [sustainability@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:sustainability@minneapolismn.gov). People who are deaf or hard of hearing can use a relay service to call 311 at 612-673-3000. TTY users call 612-263-6850. Para asistencia 612-673-2700 - Rau kev pab 612-673-2800 - Hadii aad Caawimaad u baahantahay 612-673-3500.